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Video Address

<https://archive.org/details/TablighBidahShirkJihadSh.Assim>

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**They don't speak about issues of knowledge. They say it increases differences of opinion amongst the muslims – so we don't talk about putting your hand here or there. Whether you pray like this or fast like that. So they have limited their deen in a number of particular things.**

# Observations

Title: Observations on "Tablighi Jamah" video by Sheikh Assim Al-Hakeem الشيخ عاصم الحكيم عن التبليغ جما

Innal hamdulillah, as-salatu was-salamu ala nibiyyina Muhammad, O ala aalihi o-ashabihi o-sallam.

Recently I received a link to "Tablighi Jamah" video by Sheikh Assim al-Hakeem via whatsapp from a well-wisher who doesn't associate with Tablighi Jamah. Obviously this brother sent the video to warn me concerning Tablighi Jamah about which Sheikh Assim Al-Hakeem raised some issues. The sheikh, for those who don't know him, graduated from Umm al-Qura University in Makkah and he frequently appears on Islam Channel and Peace TV. Alhamdulillah I have been participating in this effort for more than two decades and I know these issues arose from a very superficial understanding of this effort.

After watching the clip I was going to ignore it as per the usool of Tablighi Jamah. Because of this usool we find only a handful of booklets and speeches in their defence. Some may trace this usool to the conviction that this work is accepted by Allah, and if that's true then mere opinions of some mortals cannot harm this work, so this effort does not need a defence, any time spent in defending it will simply be a distraction.

However I decided to make this video upon receiving a request from a friend of mine who has been sort of active in this work locally for the last couple of years, he is yet to spend any serious length of time such as 40 days and 4 months away from home.

Naturally, I also feared sheikh Assim's video might become the reason for many muslims being deprived of the benefits of this effort. Inshallah this video should prove beneficial to the wider audience as well. So my goal here is not to tarnish the reputation of Sheikh Aseem Al-Hakeem but I would like to help clear up some misconceptions around this effort.

In my view the case of "Tablighi Jamah" is similar to the case of "Islam". We will never ward off anybody from Islam simply because of the corrupt beliefs of certain muslims (eg. Extreme Sufis and takfiris) or existence of misguided parties and corrupt media and literature. Rather we would wish everyone to investigate Islam as seriously as one would in the case of investing entire live's fortunes in a project.

What do I mean? Well, I would expect people to

- Put aside stereotypes and prejudices
- Understand & accept rationale for embracing Islam: which could be to follow commands of Allah, fulfil the

purpose of life, earn eternal paradise, follow guidance of Islam etc.

- Sift through various interpretations of Islam and grab hold of that which is handed down authentically from Rasulullah ﷺ and his sahaba ⷤ.

Someone taking Islam from the so called “experts” without recourse to the understanding of the sahaba ⷤ will never see the light of true Islam. The same is true with Tabligh Jamah. If we do not try to understand what “Tabligh Jamah” is doing without recourse to the understanding of its true followers then we will never be able to judge, much less, remain steadfast upon it.

**Now we turn to some specific issues raised in Sheikh Assim's video:**

### **0:45 Unfortunately, they have a number of innovations (bid'ah).**

It's not clear what aspect of the Tablighi Jamah activity the sheikh considers as bid'ah. Leaving home and travelling for the purpose of learning the deen, whether done alone or in groups is a well-established tradition and the lives of salaf bare testimony to this – I hope the sheikh doesn't mean this. Ashab-e-kahaf and the muhajireen of Makkah left their homes in order to safeguard their eman. Safeguarding eman is more important than anything else in life. Muslims living in the east or the west are facing such extra-ordinary challenges in this end of time, that ulama are saying going-out to safeguard their eman is fardh-ayn.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

Be prompt in doing good deeds (before you are overtaken) by turbulence which would be like a part of the dark night. During (that stormy period) a man would be a Muslim in the morning and an unbeliever in the evening or he would be a believer in the evening and an unbeliever in the morning, and would sell his faith for worldly goods. [Sahih Muslim]

Now going back to the issue of bid'ah, clearly, muslims practicing bid'ah is a serious problem. So what happens when one wants to avoid bid'ah when dealing with a new issue which did not appear during the lifetime of Rasulullah ﷺ? This dilemma is brilliantly illustrated in the story of the compilation of Qur'an.

At the Battle of Yamama around seventy sahaaba ؓ who had memorised the Qur'an were martyred. It alarmed 'Umar ؓ, and he suggested to Abu Bakr ؓ to collect Qur'an in book form. 'Umar ؓ continued to exhort, until both agreed to undertake the project, putting Zayd bin Thabit ؓ in charge of collecting the entire Qur'an in one manuscript.

In a saheeh hadith from Bukari, Zayd bin Thabit ؓ narrated:

Abu Bakr sent for me owing to the large number of casualties in the battle of Yamama, while 'Umar was sitting with him. Abu Bakr said (to me):

“'Umar has come to me and said, 'A great number of qaris of the Holy Qur'an were killed on the day of the battle of Yamama, and I am afraid that the casualties among the qaris of the Qur'an may increase on other battlefields whereby a large part of the Qur'an may be lost. Therefore I consider it advisable that you (Abu Bakr) should have the Qur'an collected.'

I said, 'How dare I do something which rasulullah ﷺ did not do?'

'Umar said, By Allaah, it is something beneficial.'

'Umar kept on pressing me for that till Allah opened my chest for that for which He had opened the chest of 'Umar and I had in that matter, the same opinion as 'Umar had.'

Abu Bakr then said to me, "You are a wise young man and we do not have any suspicion about you, and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for rasulullah ﷺ. So you should search for the fragmentary scripts of the Qur'an and collect it (in one Book)."

By Allaah, if Abu Bakr had ordered me to shift a mountain among the mountains from one place to another it would not have been heavier for me than this ordering me to collect the Qur'an. Then I said, "How can you do something which rasulullah ﷺ did not do?"

Abu Bakr said, "By Allaah, it is something beneficial." So he kept on pressing me for that until Allah opened my chest for that for which He had opened the chests of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, and I had in that matter, the same opinion as theirs. So I started compiling the Qur'an by collecting it from the leafless stalks of the date-palm tree and from the pieces of leather and hides and from the stones, and from the chests of men..."

Thus it is of paramount importance that ordinary muslims have correct understanding of bid'ah, otherwise:

- they might refrain from that which they are supposed to do because of an oversimplified definition bid'ah or
- they might indulge in bid'ah thinking it is approved by shari'ah, usually by following people of desire, emotion and thought.

As for the criteria for bid'ah, first we need to understand that there is a multitude of opinions on its definition and status of the alleged innovator. Bid'ah, literally means innovation. However, if we applied it strictly then we would fall foul of many things accepted by the salaf, for example:

1. Bilal ؓ said: "Whenever I do wudhu, after it I always perform a nawafil salaah" ["[Bukhari, Kitab Tahajud](#)"]
2. In a Masjid in Quba an Imam used to lead congregation prayers. In every rakat after reciting Surah al-Fatiha and a verse of the Qur'an he also recited Surah al-Ikhlās. When rasulullah ﷺ asked him: 'Why do you do this? He replied: 'I love reading Surah Al Ikhlas'. Rasulullah ﷺ said: 'This love will take you towards paradise'. [[Bukhari Kitab as Salaah](#)]
3. Umar ؓ ordered that Tarawi prayer should be offered together. When the people started this and

Umar ؓ saw this he said "This is a good bid'ah".  
[Bukhari Kitab-us Taraweeh]

4. During the time of Rasulallah ﷺ, Qur'an used to be recited in seven different types of qir'aats. But Uthman ؓ united the people to one type of Qirat. This was a thing not done by Rasulallah ﷺ, Abu Bakr ؓ nor Umar ؓ but by Uthman ؓ.  
['Bukhari in Fadhaa il-ul-Qur'an']
5. Diacritical marks and vowel symbols in the Qur'an was ordered by Hajjaj bin Yusuf in order to facilitate reading by the non-Arabs.
6. Names of Surahs written in the Qur'an
7. Mihrabs in the Masjid
8. Minarets of Masjid
9. Taqleed of the four schools of Fiqh
10. Fixing congregational prayer times with the clock times
11. Praying eight rakat for taraweih – did anyone pray like this in the first hundred years of Islam?

Ibn Qudaamah ؓ said:

The favoured view according to Abu 'Abdullah (i.e., Imam Ahmad ؓ), is that it is twenty rak'ahs. This was the view of al-Thawri, Abu Hanfeefah and al-Shaafa'i. Imam Maalik ؓ said tarawei salat is thirty-six rakats. [Al-Mughni, 1/457]

12. New fields of study started by the salaf such as Usool al-Tafsir, Usool al-Hadith, Usool al-Fiqh, and Asma ur-Rijal.

Umar ؓ ordered the people to offer congregational prayers of Taraweeh, and called this "Bid'ah Hasana." From this some ulama concluded that: After rasulullah ﷺ any new thing that was initiated and was not against his sunnah or the Qur'an is called Bid'ah Hasana.

Now, other ulama may not agree to this interpretation – so should their followers dispute with the people who are following a valid scholarly opinion?

Shaykh al-Albaani ؓ said:

There can be no doubt that offering Taraweeh prayer in congregation behind a single imam was not known or practised during the caliphate of Abu Bakr and the first half of 'Umar's caliphate, so in that sense it was something new. But because it was in accordance with what rasulullah ﷺ did, it is Sunnah and is not a bid'ah, and he only described it is good because of that.

[Salaat at-Taraweeh]

Imam Shafi رحمته الله said,

Bid'ah is two types: praiseworthy bid'ah, and blameworthy bid'ah. That which agrees with the Sunnah is praiseworthy and that which contradicts the Sunnah is blameworthy.

[Abu Nu'aym, Hulyat al-Awliya]

Sultan al-Ulama Izz ul-Deen bin Abdus-Salaam رحمته الله said,

Bid'ah is divided into that which is mandatory, forbidden, recommended, offensive, and permissible. The method to determine [which type it falls in] is to examine it in light of the established principles of the Shariah. If it falls under the principles of that which is mandatory, then it is mandatory, or the principles of what is forbidden, then it is forbidden, or recommended, then it's recommended, or offensive, then it's offensive, or permissible, then it's permissible.

Sheikh Izz ul-Deen رحمته الله then mentioned examples for each type,

From the mandatory bid'ah is the science of Arabic grammar in order to understand the Quran and Sunnah, and from the forbidden bid'ah is the madhhab of sects such as the Qadiriah, and from the recommended bid'ah is the creation of schools and gathering for tarawih salat, and from the permissible (mubah) bid'ah is the act of shaking hands after prayers, and from the offensive bid'ah is the decoration of masajid and copies of the Quran.

[Qawa'id al-Ahkaam]

Imam Nawawi رحمته الله explains the two types of bid'ah:

bid'ah Sayyiah and bid'ah Hasanah. Bid'ah sayyiah is a bid'ah that opposes the Qur'an and sunnah and bid'ah Hasanah is a bid'ah that is not against the Qur'an or Sunnah. [Tahzeeb al Asma wal lughaat word Bid'ah by Imam Nawawi]

Hafidh ibn Rajjab رحمته الله defines bid'ah to mean new things that have no basis in the Qur'an or Sunnah. If a new practice has evidence from the Qur'an or Sunnah it will not be bid'ah shari'ah, but it will be bid'ah logawiyya or linguistic bid'ah. (Jaami' Al Uloom Al Hukkam page 252 by Hafidhh ibn Rajjab).

Hafidh ibn Hajar Asqalani رحمته الله Writes:

If a new thing is against Islam, it will be bad. If it is not against Islam, it will be hasanah (Good).

(Fathul Bari chap on Tarawi by Hafidh Asqalani).

Shaykh ul-Islaam ibn Taymiyyah رحمته الله writes that:

Bid'ah is always bad, but some scholars say that there are two kinds of bid'ah, that one is good and one is bad. If a new thing has origin in the Qur'an and Sunnah it will be called linguistic Bid'ah but not Bid'ah in Shari'ah. Only the word bid'ah will be used on the new things. Like, the Qur'an was collected in one book after the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and the

congregational Tarawi prayer was started in Sayyidna Umar ؓ's time but these two things have an origin in the Sunnah. Therefore, it will be called linguistic bid'ah. (Iqtidah al Sirat al Mustaqeem chap on Bid'ah by Hafidhh ibn Taymiyya).

He (Ibn Taymeeyah ؒ) also said :

'The Bid'ah by which a person would be counted as from the people of desires is that which is well known by the people of knowledge of the Sunnah in it opposing the Book and the Sunnah; such as the bid'ah of the Khawarij, Rawafidah, al-Qadareeyah and the Murjah.''

['Majmoo' al-Fatawa Ibn Taymeeyah' 35/414]

Al-Qadi Abu Bakr ibn al-`Arabi ؒ in his explanation of the saying, "**Beware of new things!**" said that, bid'ah is of two kinds; i.e.     [`Aridat al-ahwadh fi Sharh Sahih al-Tirmidhi]

- a. Bid'ah that has its origin only in desire, and acting on desire is wrong, and
- b. Bid'ah that is supported by wisdom- this type is from the Rightly Guided Caliphs and other excellent learned scholars.

Now I would challenge anyone to participate Tabligh Jamah activities and find out what aspect of the effort is not sanctioned by Shari'ah. But with one caution, don't look the mistakes of the participants – consider them as patients who are in a spiritual hospital! Scrutinise the objects, means and methods particular to the effort.

Some people have stooped to such ignorance as to point at their eating and sleeping in the masjids. This is not surprising because they are ignorant of all the activities that used to go on in masjid nabawi. They are used to seeing people only going masjids for salat and dhikr.

In fact there are three types of people for whom eating and sleeping in the masjid is allowed and those who participate in tablighi jamah effort qualify upon all three conditions. These are:

- People in itiqaf
- Seekers of knowledge. Around hundred sahabis, ashab-e-suffa, stayed in the Prophets mosque, many for years.
- Musafirs

## 0:50 They depend on books involving fabricated hadith, weak hadith and in some incidences which indicate shirk,...

Fadhail A'mal is often considered to be the principal book for tabligh. This is not the case. Had it been the case then it would have been read universally including Arabs. The usool of this effort is taken from the book "Hayatus Sahaba" by Maulana Yusuf Khandlawi ؒ and thus it is studied in all markazes.

Fadhail A'mal consists of commentaries on Quranic verses, hadith and seera compiled by Sheikh Zakaria Khandlawi ؒ. The aim of the book is to motivate people to practice the complete deen in a language understandable to laymen. There is hardly any other book in the market that come close to it in terms of content and scope: developing love for Allah, sunnah and sahaba; Building eman and encouragement for basic deeds such as salah, dhikr, reciting Qur'an, enjoining good and forbidding evil. Riyadh-us-saaliheen by Imam Nawawi ؒ and Tambahul Ghafileen by Faqih Abu Lais Samarqandi ؒ are good alternatives.

As for the disputed narrations in Fadhail A'mal then it is impossible to discuss individual hadith or stories in this short video. However, I would like the viewers to reflect on the followings points in this regard:

- If you know a fabricated hadith then steer away from it. However be aware that though a hadith may be fabricated, it does not necessarily negate the importance of the subject matter of the hadith. For instance, we all hear the famous statement attributed to Rasulullah ﷺ saying

[Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China.](#)

It has many chains of narrations which are all weak and some muhaddiths declared this hadith is fabricated. However, there are sahih hadiths which which support the message it contains.

- The status and use of weak hadith is debated among the ulama. When the authenticity of a weak hadith is mentioned it comes across as valueless but this is not the case. One must realise that weak hadith are on a separate spectrum to fabricated hadiths. A hadith may be labelled weak because of weaknesses in the chain of transmission but they are strengthened by their number.
- The text of a weak hadith (mathn) may well be a statement of Rasulullah ﷺ and so we should show due regard for it. The classification according to authenticity gives the level of certainty that it came from Rasulullah ﷺ without any alteration.

- In order to get an idea of the reliability of hadith let's put the authenticity of the hadeeth in perspective. Of course one can differ in specific figures but I hope the point is taken.

Type of narration	Degree of certainty
Mutawatir hadith	100%
Saheeh hadith	99%
Hasan hadith	90%
Weak hadith	70%
Fabricated hadith	10%
Mathematical theorems	100%
Mathematical theory supported by numerical computations	99%
Laws of Physics	95%
Laws of Social science	60%
Broadsheet newspaper	60%
Textbook history	65%
Tabloaid newspaper	30%
Heresay, Whatsapp messages	15%

- Many ulama allow use of weak hadiths for virtues of deeds which have well-grounded foundation in deen. It is not used for aqeeda and fiqhi issues.
- We are not forbidden to narrate a story simply because of doubtful origin. Rasulullah ﷺ allowed us to narrate stories from ahle kitab even though we know they are doubtful:

You may report about the Children of Israel and there is no blame (haraj). Report about (or from) me, but do not tell untruths about me." [Risala]

Sheikh Zakariya رحمه الله did not invent these stories, he put these in the book because he attached some value to it. None of these stories are impossible for Allah. Certainly Qur'an and Hadith record many stories which are far more miraculous than the questionable stories in this book.

- Finally on this topic: Does the presence of these stories render the books containing them useless for our tarbiyah? Sheikh Asim mentioned a story which may be construed as a sign of shirk. There are other people who conflate alleged problems of shirk by different personalities in India with this effort. In reality, such cases are regional, and detached from the work of Tablighi Jam'ah – for this very reason such local problems are not affecting the wider current of the tablighi effort. Had it not been the case, then we would have seen for example hanafi madhab, which predominates in India, spread by means of Tablighi work. Sheikh Aseem himself is a witness to this in his discussion around Arabs. My view is that these comments are not helpful – so once again, criticise tablighi work for what it is, it's aims, principles, means and methods.

## **0:58 Going to grave and seeking the blessing of the deceased in the graves.**

This is sheer propaganda. It is far from the reality and seems to be an extrapolation from the alleged teachings from stories in Fadail A'mal.

I have never seen anyone venerating at graves as part of tabligh jamat effort. I wonder if sheikh Aseem met a single person in his life who worships in the grave and thinks Tabligh Jamah taught this. Even if the sheikh met someone like that then would that statistically amount to anything significant?

Frankly, ulama who propagate these only undermine their own scholarship and authority – my advice to anyone who pass on such allegations is to personally investigate it practically.

In my years of interaction with them I have not seen a single person in tablighi jamat praying in a grave? Rather the crying voice of tablighi jamat is to turn our attention to the Creator, not creation whether dead or alive. Indeed one of the aims of tablighi jamat is to develop the participants to a level in their eeman that they can take from the treasures of Allah and solve their problems by means of sabre and salah. If someone immerses fully in their programme then they will not have any inclination or time for shirk and bid'ah. Anyone can verify the truth of this!

## 1:35 They have six points, restricting the days of travel to 3, 10, 40 days etc.

When jamat goes out, it exerts effort on three fronts simultaneously, namely:

- on rectifying and developing oneself,
- on fellow travellers
- upon the residents of the locality they visit

The primary focus of the above three efforts is to develop six qualities in that time. Tablighi jamah is not the first group to classify knowledge or setting targets to focus efforts, such classifications are common in many branches of deen. It is not necessary that everyone will succeed in developing all six qualities at the same time.

Here I would give a very brief overview of the six qualities:

1. Develop yaqeen in **La ilaha illallah Muhammadur Rasulullah**. The vast multitude of muslims utter this kalima but by their action they display a total disregard to the demand and conviction upon this kalima. For example they know Allah is sustainer, yet many muslims engage in worldly life in such a way that it's the job, shop, etc are the sustainer. A consequence of this is that when the demand of dunya clashes with demands of deen, they drop the commands of deen. Similarly they understand the criteria for success is in following sunnah and yet their social life is like Christians and their businesses run like the Jews!

So by leaving behind all apparent means, and by engaging in the environment of da'wah one develops the eeman. One begins to practically negate power of all means and creations: Food, water, money, gold, silver, iron, sun, moon, land, systems, medicine, doctor, lawyer, engineer, job, shop, house, car, career, wife, children, intellect, majority, power, authority, etc. None of these things has any capacity to benefit or harm a person. These creations are akin to the staff of Musa, which became harmful or beneficial only by the Will of Allah. The more one furnishes oneself with this quality the further he will go from shirk & bid'ah!

Life of the person [and the community] is then built upon the fact that, Allah has not kept the means of all success of oneself [and the community] beyond their own individual [and collective] eeman and a'mal. This is true equal opportunity and ultimately empowering!

As for the second part of the kalima – Allah promised success, love and forgiveness in following the footsteps of Rasulullah ﷺ. We need to follow his sunnah in appearance, characters, dealings, mission, worry and concern. Sahaba ؓ showed us how to

follow sunnah in all manner of things as individuals and as an ummah. It's the strength of their belief and the devotion to deen vis-a-vis their worldly engagemnet or rather lack of it that made them the best generation or khairul kurun. This is why knowing the practical lives of Sahaba ﷺ is also imperative in knowing how to implement sunnah.

2. Salah is the first command of Allah after eeman. One develops concentration and devotion in salah to take from the treasures of Allah to fulfil his/her needs. If salah is of right quality then it will trasform one's life outside salah. Effort to develop this quality includes correcting recitation of Qur'an, performing wudhu properly, pray salah in congregation, fulfilling one's needs and seeking help of Allah through salah, performing tahajjud and salat-ul-Ishraq etc.
3. Through knowledge of the virtues of deeds that Allah require us to perform at different time, place and conditions; remaining conscious of Him, the ummah will develop the capacity to perform deeds which will make it successful. Allah will ask us on the Day of Judgement about whether we acted upon our knowledge.
4. Suppressing one's needs to fulfil the needs of fellow muslims is a feature of muslim brotherhood that muhajir and ansars demonstrated. We learn to value the muslims according to their status; for a single believer Allah will maintain the whole universe! This quality is the antidote to takfir, selfishness, egoism, narcissistic personality etc.
5. Develop sincerity in doing everything for the sake Allah, eschewing all forms of showing off in order to make our deeds weighty and acceptable to Allah.
6. Sahaba's going out in the path of Allah to fulfil the needs of deen is as normal as doing 9 to 5 in this day and age. Going out helps one to develop the concern for the humanity, learning to serve them, get close to Allah, conduct teaching & learning, participate in da'wah, enjoining good and forbid evil, get direct help from Allah etc. To do this one should devote the three blessings of time, health & wealth.

Specific outings for 3, 10, 40 or 120 days etc are purely for logistical reasons. But as a matter of fact as and when the need arises they relax these rules, more readily than many of the formal educational establishments like madrasah or darul ulooms!

## 1:48 Not speaking entirely about jihad. They will shun you. When they speak about it they will stop you, shut you up. This is a taboo.

Well, as far as I know, Tabligh Jamah use the word "Jihad" in their discourses quite frequently. All too often they mention the verse of the Qur'an:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths, and lo! Allah is with the righteous (29:69). **14 sec**

Among other verses which one can hear frequently in various gatherings are:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَزْوَاجُكُمْ وَعَشِيرَتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ اقْتَرَفْتُمُوهَا وَتِجَارَةٌ تَخْشَوْنَ كَسَادَهَا وَمَسَاكِينُ تُرَضُّونَهَا أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرَبَّصُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ

Say, "If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your relatives, wealth which you have obtained, commerce wherein you fear decline, and dwellings with which you are pleased are more beloved to you than Allah and His Messenger and jihad in His cause, then wait until Allah executes His command. And Allah does not guide the rebellious." (9:24) **50 sec**

انْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Go forth, whether light or heavy, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the cause of Allah. That is better for you, if you only knew. (9:41) **25 sec**

قُلْ هَذِهِ سَبِيلِي أَدْعُو إِلَى اللَّهِ ۚ عَلَىٰ بَصِيرَةٍ أَنَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِي

Say, "This is my way; I invite to Allah with insight, I and those who follow me..." (12:108) **15 sec**

Maulana Umar Palanpuri ؒ once explained that in the verse

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ وَجَاهِدْهُمْ بِهِ جِهَادًا كَبِيرًا

So obey not the disbelievers, but strive against them (by preaching) with the utmost endeavour, with it (the Quran) (25:52). **9 sec**

Allah declared the work of da'wah in Makkah is the greatest jihad. There was no fighting in Makkah. The arabic word for fighting is qital and it's not used in Qur'an until much later.

Abu Huraira ؓ reported: We were sitting with Rasulullah ﷺ when a young man approached us. When we saw him, we said, "If only this young man had given his youth and effort and strength in the path of Allah!" Rasulullah ﷺ heard our conversation and he said:

Is there nothing in the path of Allah but fighting?  
Whoever strives for his parents is in the path of Allah.  
Whoever strives for his family is in the path of Allah.  
Whoever strives for himself to be independent is in

the path of Allah. Whoever strives to gain many possessions for himself is in the path of Satan.

[Sunan al-Kubra of Baihaqi, Sahih according to al-Albani]

In other hadith Rasulullah ﷺ said

Whoever goes out seeking knowledge is in the path of Allah until he returns. [Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Hasan]

Rasulullah ﷺ has said:

To guard Muslims from infidels in Allah's cause for one day is better than the World and whatever is on it's surface, and a place in Paradise as small as that occupied by the whip of one of you is better than the World and whatever is on it's surface; and a morning's or an evening's journey which a slave (person) travels in Allah's cause is better than the World and whatever is on it's surface. [Sahih Bukhari].

And of course the guarding at the borders is not for qital rather to make safety of the eeman and salat of Muslims.

Hafiz Ibn Hajr رحمه الله says in Fathul Bari:

Attaining the knowledge of the basic principles of deen, studying islamic theology, propagation of good and forbidding of evil are all Jihad.

Thus jihad has much wider meaning. Restricting jihad to simply fighting is thus incorrect.

Perhaps Sheikh Asim meant to use the restricted meaning for jihad, ie "kital" or "Holy War" when he said Jihad is like a taboo topic for Tabligh Jamah.

Somebody asked Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه, "O Abu 'Abdur-Rahman! Narrate to us about the battles during the time of the fitnah, as Allah says:

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ

And fight them until there is no more fitnah. (2:193)

Ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه said:

Do you know what is meant by the fitnah? Let your mother bereave you! Muhammad ﷺ used to fight against the muskriks, for a Muslim was put to trial in his religion (The muskriks will either kill him or chain him as a captive). His fighting was not like your fighting which is carried on for the sake of ruling [Saheeh Bukhari].

With that we can add another hadith which will serve as a timely warning. It has been narrated on the authority of Hudhaifa ibn al-Yaman رضي الله عنه who said:

O Rasulullah, no doubt, we had an evil time and Allah brought us a good time through which we are now living Will there be a bad time after this good time? He said: Yes.

I said: Will there be a good time after this bad time?

He said: Yes.

I said: Will there be a bad time after good time?

He said: Yes.

I said: How?

Whereupon he said: There will be leaders who will not be led by my guidance and who will not adopt my ways? There will be among them men who will have the hearts of devils in the bodies of human beings. I said: What should I do O Rasulullah, if I (happen) to live in that time?

He replied: You will listen to the Amir and carry out his orders; even if your back is flogged and your wealth is snatched, you should listen and obey.

This hadith made it abundantly clear what sorts rulers and the elites muslims are destined to face over time and exactly how they should respond.

Obviously, when it involves kital, Jihad becomes a hot topic, it is not easy to avoid controversy – so instead of debating about it I would leave some points for reflection:

- Jihad-kital is a very serious matter and lives of countless muslims and non-muslims could be at stake. Ordinary people should not entertain discussion on this topic – they should follow people of authority and ulama. In the last few decades, how many thousands of muslims have perished in Egypt, Algeria, Syria and other places for the so-called jihad, spurred on by people of emotion, power-politics and their enemies who want to incite their youth in order to destroy them?
- Muslims have a duty of following people of authority – such grievances as poverty, lack of “freedom” or political participation or any other worldly reason are not legitimate reasons for jihad.
- There is no legitimacy for targeting unarmed civilians.
- In non-Muslim countries muslims are bound by the law of the land.
- Jihad cannot begin without a khalifa. Just look at the confusion in Syria – who is fighting who's war there and in the name of what?

Regarding Jihad Maulana Umar Palanpuri ﷺ further explained that Allah taught us, for all the people who will come in this world till the Hour regarding His Help.

- In the battle of Badr Allah showed how believers received His help. For 13 years they were sacrificing for the sake of Allah in Makkah. Three conditions for help in Badr are:

1. Taqwa
2. Sabr – when hard time comes due to following His commands
3. Earnestly making dua

بَلَىٰ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّنْ فُورِهِمْ هَذَا يُمْدِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آلَافٍ مِّنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ

Yes, if you remain patient and conscious of Allah and the enemy come upon you [attacking] in rage, your Lord will reinforce you with five thousand angels having marks [of distinction] 3:125 **25 sec**

- In the battle of Uhud Allah showed that whenever our sight/attention goes to other than Allah, the Help of Allah departs from believers.

وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُم بِإِذْنِهِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا أَرَاكُمْ  
مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ مِنْكُمْ مِمَّنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَّنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ثُمَّ صَرَفَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ  
ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Allah has surely fulfilled His promise to you when you, with His will, were killing them off, until you showed weakness and disputed in the matter and disobeyed after He had shown you what you liked. Among you there were some who were seeking the mundane, and among you there were others who were seeking the Hereafter. After that, He reversed your position against them, so that He may test you. Of course, He has forgiven you. Allah is All-Gracious to the believers (3:152). **51 sec**

Some of the muslims who were in charge of securing the mountain gave attention to materials and thus jeopardised the success. Whenever people's attention turns away from Creator to creation, Help of Allah departs. Even though they were the sahaba, in the presense of sayyidul ambiya, even though their hearts were clean of bid'ah and shirk, Allah did not tolerate that some of those paid any attention or gave value to worldly materials. Count how many hearts of today's muslims are saturated with the love of dunya!!

Saying by tongue is not enough, Allah can bring severe tests of eeman. If they fail to live up to the statement they utter with their tongue, what will happen to help of Allah and the victory they so crave?

When their sight went to the materials three kinds of weaknesses arose in their midst:

1. Make worldly intention [which resulted in:]
2. Weakening/differing opinions, whether to collect the booty.
3. Disunity between them
4. Disobey their leader

- In the battle of Hunayn Allah showed how the Help of Allah is prevented from descending. Enemy was only one third – so muslims begun to think their victory is secured due to thie numerical majority.

- As result of this corruption of yaqeen the help of Allah was prevented from coming.

لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ ۖ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ ۖ إِذْ أَعْجَبَتْكُمْ كَثْرَتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تُغْنِ عَنْكُمْ  
شَيْئًا وَضَافَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَرْضُ بِمَا رَحُبَتْ ثُمَّ وَلَّيْتُمْ مُدْبِرِينَ

Truly Allah has given you victory on many battle fields, and on the Day of Hunain when you rejoiced at your great number but it availed you naught and the

earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, then you turned back in flight (9:25). **33 sec**

So my brothers, if the Help of Allah was prevented from coming due to change in the yaqeen of only some sahaba, despite them being believers and in the company of Rasulullah ﷺ, then, what about us, when we want Help and victory from Allah but in our midst are many who are desiring dunya and their yaqeen is on worldly means and materials?

Some people might think Jihad is the solution to all the problems of the ummah. To put it bluntly, this belief is an illusion! This is no better than thinking:

- Money is the solution to the ummah's problems, making everyone a millionaire is all that we need, or
- Building tall buildings, nice roads, beautiful mosques, hospitals and colleges in every single muslim town is the solution, or
- Controlling the seat of government is the solution, or
- Getting votes of majority is the solution, or
- Making everybody a graduate and giving them their desired job is the solution, or
- Reaching the pinnacle of science and technology is the solution, or
- Uniting at any cost is the solution.

All these seven categories and other like them are means but none of them have any guarantee of success. These are means promoted by those who are not guided by revelation. In fact Allah thoroughly refutes all these categories in the Qur'an. Sadly in this day and age many muslims are pursuing them wholeheartedly, some even turned the means into goals!

On the contrary, Allah kept success in complete deen. Thus, the only solution is to return back to deen, and that will only happen if we develop beliefs and qualities of sahaba ؓ by undergoing similar trials, alienation, fear & loss, poverty, patience and sacrifices. When a soul really knows his deen then it will undergo every kind of difficulty to connect to Allah and reach his destination. Only when we have achieved such an environment then we can gain victory by the Will of Allah. There is no magic formula or short-cut to this.

Rasulullah ﷺ said:

When you deal in 'eenah (usury), take hold of the tails of cows, become content with agriculture and abandon jihaad in the path of Allaah, then Allaah will permit your humiliation and He will not remove it from you, until you return to your deen.

[Saheeh: Abu Daawood (no.3462) and al-Bayhaquee in *as-Sunanul-Kubraa* (5/316), Authenticated by Ibn Taymiyyah in *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (29/30).]

Imam Malik ؒ:

Whosoever introduces into Islaam an innovation, and holds it to be something good, has indeed alleged that Muharnnad ﷺ has betrayed his message. Read the saying of Allaah – the Most Blessed – the Most High:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and I have chosen for you Islaam as your religion. [5:3]. **11 sec**

So that which was not part of deen at that time, cannot be part of the religion today. And the last part of this ummah cannot be rectified, except by that which rectified its first part."

[Related by al-Qaadee 'Iyaadh in ash-Shifaa (2/676).]

Thus all those who are involved in the effort for the betterment of the ummah, must strengthen eeman; negate power of creation and develop firm yaqeen in the power and qudra of Allah; turn the direction of their life away from dunya and towards akhira; adapt sunnah in everything and seek only the pleasure of Allah.

**2:00 They don't speak about issues of knowledge. They say it increases differences of opinion amongst the muslims – so we don't talk about putting your hand here or there. Whether you pray like this or fast like that. So they have limited their deen in a number of particular things.**

At the beginning of the video the sheikh appeared to praise the tablighi brothers for attending circles of knowledge only to contradict himself at the end of the video. I guess at the end of the clip he meant to refute lack of concern for fiqhi issues, regarding which the position of ahle-sunnah wal-jamah is one of respect and tolerance for diversity of opinions because of the fact that even sahaba ﷺ entertained differences of opinion at the time of Rasulullah ﷺ.

Acquiring knowledge is very important and so it is one of the six qualities. Tablighi outing has been described by some as mobile madrasah. It is well known that people involved in tablighi efforts also establish traditional madrasas. They are achieving this without making knowledge the primary goal of tablighi outings. The emphasis is on practicing upon knowledge. The rationale for this becomes clear when one reflects on such questions as – what proportion of muslims are praying the regular five time salah despite knowing it is obligatory!

Thus the problem of discarding of obligatory duties has been given priority over discussion on fiqhi issues for which there is reasonable Ikhtilaf. Debating or promoting one's opinion over another is the domain of ulama. If laymen debate then this will only result in destruction and further disunity.

Tablighi Jamah have not limited the deen in any way. It may appear so in a superficial observation – the reality is much more complex. Maulana Ilyas ؒ said:

The actual aim of this movement of ours is to teach the Muslims everything with which the Holy Prophet ﷺ came. This is our aim. As for this movement of jama'ats and tablighi gasht- these are the initial means of achieving this aim; and the instruction and teaching of *Kalimah* and *salat* are, in other words the ABC of our complete syllabus. It is also clear that our *jama'ats* cannot do all the work. What can be done by them is only this that wherever they go they can only produce a motion and awakening by means of their effort, and attach those people who are unmindful of religious concerns, to the possessors of deen of their place - and can inspire those people of their place who have the worry for deen for making efforts to reform the ignorant common people.

The elders of Tablighi Jamah fully accept the fact that the ummah will only unite upon authentic stories from Qur'an and Sunnah; and the implementation of deen as understood by the sahaba ﷺ. This has been reflected in all their efforts. For example the second ameer Maulana Yusuf ﷺ wrote a three volume book, "Hayatus Sahaba" so that the true lifestyle of sahaba ﷺ comes in front of every worker of deen, and that usools of the work are drawn from this book.

Some people allege tablighi brothers restrict themselves to "enjoining good" and do not "forbid evil". The fact is:

- Forbidding evil is more delicate than enjoining good
- A daee, who is closer to a doctor than a qadi, needs to deal with people gently. Allah said in the Qur'an:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ  
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him). (3:159) **33**

**sec**

- People perform evil due to internal weaknesses – it's more lasting to strengthen people internally. When the young man requested that fornication be made halal, how did rasulullah ﷺ handle him?

- Rasulullah ﷺ said:

Make things easy and do not make things hard. Tell people of glad tidings, and do not push them away. (Bukhari)

- Tablighi effort delivers the effect of "forbidding evil" over time and in subtle ways – count how many people have given up so many evil beliefs, evil habits and evil businesses due to their association with this effort!
- Reformation takes time. Reflect on why
  - Qur'an was revealed over 23 years
  - Most commands of dos and don't revealed in Madina.
  - Prohibition of alcohol came in stages.

## Epilogue – Defining Characteristics

As a final note I would like to say what Sheikh Asim al-Hakim didn't say. The positives which the sheikh mentioned are the ones anyone can observe, even non-muslims can notice that. I would have expected anyone of his calibre who talks about the effort of Tablighi jamat to at least notice the defining characteristics of this effort – and perhaps weigh up the pros and cons in light of shari'ah.

Actually, there are quite a few barriers to correctly understanding this effort. Even the name "Tablighi Jamah" is a misnomer, because many people straightaway start analysing the word "Tabligh" or "Jamah" or "Da'wah" or "Islah" in order to find shortcomings of the effort – none of these words fully encapsulate the full range of activities they do. This is why the best way to understand it is to fully engage with all the activities, at least for three days. A visit to Nizamuddin is highly recommended.

So now I will outline some defining characteristics of tablighi jamat:

- The primary objective of Tablighi Jamat is to strengthen iman of individuals and communities as articulated by Maulana Ilyas rahimahullah. Much emphasis is given to realising the true meaning of La Ilaha Illallah Muhammadur Rasulullah, which includes negating the belief in the power of creation (ie materials, objects, systems and means) to harm or benefit and asserting the power of the almighty creator. And to do so in deeds as well as words, over and over again. In addition great emphasis has been placed on implementing sunnah in all aspects of life.
- Turning the focus of our life from this world to akhirah, resorting to amala of deen for the solution of both worlds and relegating the means of the world only to obey the command of Allah. This will transform the person internally, strengthen him/her and motivate them to develop finer qualities, persevere and fulfil the purpose of life.
- Taking practical steps to develop quality muslims out of nominal muslims. Their knowledge, character, sincerity, taqwa, tawakkul, generosity, dhikr, tahajjud etc should improve. Purify their business, culture and collective lifestyles of shirk and disobedience of Allah.
- Fulfil the purpose and distinction of this ummah. This is rendered via da'wah, tabligh, enjoin good and forbid evil, khuruz, sacrifice, self-denial, perseverance, seeking direct help from Allah etc.

Finally I pray that Allah opens the reality of this work and give us the opportunity to participate till our death. Wassallam.